

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

INFO CINCLANT

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STADIS //////////////////////////////////

LIMDIS

FOLLOWING TEL SENT SECSTATE FROM REYKJAVIK 7 APRIL REPEATED

QTE REYKJAVIK 0372

STADIS - LIMDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y / T E X T

PASS ALSO TO SCOTT GEORGE (EURNE)

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR IC

SUBJECT: ICELAND DEFENSE FORCE (IDF) RETENTION ISSUE

1. SUMMARY: GOI INTENDS TO TRIGGER ADVANCE SIX MONTH NOTIFICATION PROVISION OF ARTICLE VII OF 1951 DEFENSE AGREEMENT WITHIN NEXT TWO WEEKS. FONMIN CLAIMS GOI MUST DO THIS FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL PURPOSES BUT ALSO CLAIMS THIS ACTION WILL HAVE BENEFICIAL SIDE EFFECT IN MBFR TALKS. GOI' S PLAN IS TO TRIGGER THE SIX MONTH NOTICE PERIOD BUT STALL ON INITIATING THE SUBSEQUENT
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TWELVE MONTH NOTICE PERIOD. FONMIN FAILS TO SEE DANGER OF THIS TACTIC. PERSONAL INTERVENTION ON PART OF SECSTATE RECOMMENDED. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING ANNUAL DIPLOMATIC DINNER FONMIN GAVE LAST NIGHT FOR CHIEFS OF MISSIONS, FONMIN AGUSTSSON APPROACHED ME AND CASUALLY REMARKED THAT HE AND I WILL BE BUSY THE NEXT SIX MONTHS RENEGOTIATING THE 1951 DEFENSE AGREEMENT. WHEN I EXPRESSED SURPRISE THE FONMIN SAID HE MUST CARRY OUT HIS ORIGINAL INTENTION TO TRIGGER THE SIX MONTH PROVISION OF ARTICLE VII BUT USG SHOULD NOT WORRY BECAUSE PARLIAMENT WOULD NOT CONSENT TO WITHDRAWAL OF IDF. CONSEQUENTLY THE SUBSEQUENT TWELVE MONTH NOTIFICATION PERIOD WOULD NOT BE INVOKED AND A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY REVISION OF THE AGREEMENT WOULD BE NEGOTIATED IN THE MEANTIME. HE ADDED THAT IDF'S ASSISANCE IN WESTMANN ISLAND DISASTER HAS WON US PUBLIC SUPPORT AS WELL. WHEN I CONTINUED TO EXPRESS SCHOCK OVER THIS TACTIC, THE FONMIN CLAIMED HE HAD AN UNDERSTANDING WITH MY PREDECESSOR THAT SHOULD IT BE NECESSARY TO TAKE THE APPROACH DESCRIBED ABOVE THE ATTITUDE OF THE USG WOULD BE ONE OF " UNDERSTANDING AND APPROVAL". FONMIN ALSO CLAIMED THAT HE RECEIVED SUCH ASSURANCE FROM SECSTATE. WHEN I REMARKED THAT I ATTENDED ALL TALKS DURING HIS JANUARY WASHINGTON VISIT AND COULD REMEMBER NO SUCH DISCUSSION WITH SECSTATE OR ANYONE ELSE IN WASHINGTON ON THIS APPROACH FONMIN REPLIED ALL OF THIS HAPPENED BEFORE MY ARRIVAL AS AMBASSADOR LAST FALL. I THEN REPLIED THAT HE AND I HAVE HAD SEVERAL DISCUSSIONS ON IDF ISSUE SINCE MY ARRIVAL AND AT NO TIME DID HE GIVE ME, ADMIRAL BELING OR ANYONE IN THIS EMBASSY ANY IMPRESSION OTHER THAN HE WANTED TO STALL TRIGGERING THE SIX MONTH NOTIFICATION PERIOD. I REMINDED HIM OF THE MANY OCCASIONS WHEN IN FACT HE AND THE PRIME MINISTER MADE STATEMENTS TO US THAT THEY INTENDED TO STALL PRESENTING THE IDF ISSUE TO PARLIAMENT. I ALSO REMINDED HIM THAT HE DIRECTED US NOT TO PROVIDE OFFICAWLY ANY STUDIES OR REPORTS TO HIM WHICH MIGHT FORCE HIM INTO ACTING ON THE IDF ISSUE. AGUSTSSON ADMITTED ALL THIS BUT REMARKED HE WOULD HAVE TO SUBMIT SOME SORT OF REVISION OF THE AGREEMENT TO PARLIAMENT. HE KEPT REPEATING HE SAW NO REASON FOR CONCERN ON MY PART, THAT THE SITUATION TODAY IS NOT SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM A YEAR AGO WHEN HE RECEIVED " SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING" FROM USG. I REPLIED THAT THERE IS NO QUARREL WITH HIS REQUIREMENT TO SUBMIT SOMETHING TO PARLIAMENT BUT, WITH HIS APPROVAL, I HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH HIS LEGAL

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ADVISOR, HANS ANDERSEN, ABOUT A NEW MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

THAT COULD BE ACCOMMODATED WITHIN THE WORDING OF THE EXISTING AGREEMENT, AND THAT THIS MEMORANDUM WOULD BE SUBMITTED FOR PARLIAMENTARY APPROVAL RATHER THAN A NEW DEFENSE AGREEMENT WITHOUT THE NEED TO TRIGGER ARTICLE VII. I ALSO REMINDED HIM THAT IT WAS HIS PERSONAL WISH THAT REVISIONS OF IDF ARRANGEMENTS BE AGREED UPON BY BOTH OUR GOVERNMENTS BEFORE ANY ACTION WAS TAKEN BY GOI REGARDING THE IDF ISSUE AND REITERATED THAT WE WERE WAITING FOR HIM TO GIVE US THE WORD.

3. I REMARKED FURTHER THAT THIS SUDDEN CHANGE PUTS NOT ONLY THE USG IN A TOUGH SPOT BUT ALSO JEOPARDIZES THE DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS NOW UNDERWAY IN MBFR AND WEAKENS NATO' S POSTURE IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS. FONMIN REMARKED THAT HE RECOGNIZES THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEM HE IS CAUSING THE USG BUT HE IS FACING A SERIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEM IN HIS OWN COUNTRY AND HE HAS TO LOOK TO HIS OWN INTERESTS FIRST. (COMMENT. THIS IS REFERENCE TO THE SHAKINESS OF PRESENT COALITION GOV'T AND THE THREATENED BREAKUP OF HIS OWN PROGRESSIVE PARTY WHERE THE YOUNG PROGRESSIVE WING OF PARTY IS THREATENING TO SEEK ASSOCIATION WITH OTHER PARTIES. THIS IS THE ANTI- IDF WING OF HIS PARTY.)

4. FONMIN THEN MADE THE ASTOUNDING STATEMENT THAT BY TRIGGERING ARTICLE VII IT WOULD FORCE THE SOVIETS TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY AT MBFR AND PUT THEM ON NOTICE THAT THEY WILL HAVE TO WITHDRAW THEIR TROOPS FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA. HE THEN POINTED TO THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR ACROSS THE ROOM AND SAID THAT HE DOES NOT WANT IDF TO LEAVE ICELAND BECAUSE OF THIS. I THEN TOLD FONMIN OF MY CONVERSATION WITH ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR EARLIER THIS WEEK (REYKJAVIK 0367) AND ASKED WHETHER HE DID NOT THINK IT SIGNIFICANT THAT EVEN A COMMUNIST COUNTRY THOUGHT WE WOULD WEAKEN OUR BARGAINING POSITION AT MBFR IF THE ALLIANCE REDUCED ITS FORCES UNILATERALLY. THIS SEEMED TO HAVE SOME IMPACT ON HIM.

5. AFTER LONG DISCUSSION ON WHETHER TRIGGERING THE SIX MONTH PROVISION WOULD BE BENEFICIAL OR HARMFUL TO NATO' S POSTURE AT MBFR FONMIN AGREED TO RECONSIDER AND TALK TO ME FURTHER TUESDAY MORNING APRIL 10. I TOLD HIM THAT I WOULD REPORT THIS CONVERSATION TO WASHINGTON TODAY. HE REPLIED HE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN SEC STATE' S REACTION.

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6. FONMIN ALSO LAST NIGHT ASKED IF I HAD RECEIVED FROM WASHINGTON THE RATIONALE PAPER (STUDY ENTITLED " RATIONALE FOR THE SECURITY OF ICELAND ".) I REPLIED IT HAD JUST BEEN RECEIVED AND I AM PREPARED TO SHOW IT TO HIM. HE SUGGESTED TUESDAY. I SAID IT CONTAINED POINTS WHICH COULD MAKE HIM WANT TO THINK

TWICE BEFORE EMBARKING ON HIS COURSE OF ACTION WHICH I STILL
FELT WOULD BE DANGEROUS BEYOND US- ICELANDIC BILATERAL INTERESTS.
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ROGERS

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